

FARM LABOR NEWS

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Union Campaign Swings Into High Gear Florida Citrus Belt

With a staff of 13 organizers, equipped with sound trucks, movies, cameras and recording machines, the American Federation of Labor has launched an all out drive to organize the citrus belt of Florida. J. L. Rhodes, Assistant Southern Director for the A. F. of L., is directing the campaign. Rhodes, who is known as the "Flying Organizer," flies his own airplane. He makes his headquarters in Orlando.

There is a large number of canning and packing plants located in the citrus belt of Florida. The A.F. of L. has membership in 39 large plants and packing sheds. Petitions for NLRB elections are being filed daily. The Farm Labor Union is taking part in the campaign organizing the grove workers and citrus pickers.

Union Office Set Up In Auburndale, Fla.

The Polk County Workers Union, Local 201, has opened an office in the Peoples Bank Building in Auburndale, Fla., to serve members of the National Farm Labor Union in that area. L. S. Warnock, President, and Gene Fraiser, Secretary of Local 201, are in charge.

Florida Citrus Pickers Seek Union Contracts

H. L. Mitchell, President of the National Farm Labor Union, paid a visit to officers and members of the recently chartered Polk County Workers Union, Local 201, and reported upon his return to the National Office that contract negotiations were underway with the Adams Packing Association of Auburndale, Fla.

This company employs about 300 grove workers and fruit pickers, and the majority are members of the National Farm Labor Union. L. S. Warnock, President of the Local, and A.F. of L. Organizer Elmer Dowell, accompanied President Mitchell when he called upon the general manager of the Adams Packing Association. Arrangements were made for the union committee to begin the negotiations of a contract covering all field workers.

President Mitchell also addressed a meeting of pickers at Lake Wales while in the state.

Organizer Warnock reported that one night recently, 54 white workers meeting in the open air near Davenport, stood in the pouring rain to hear the message of unionism.

Betton Heads South

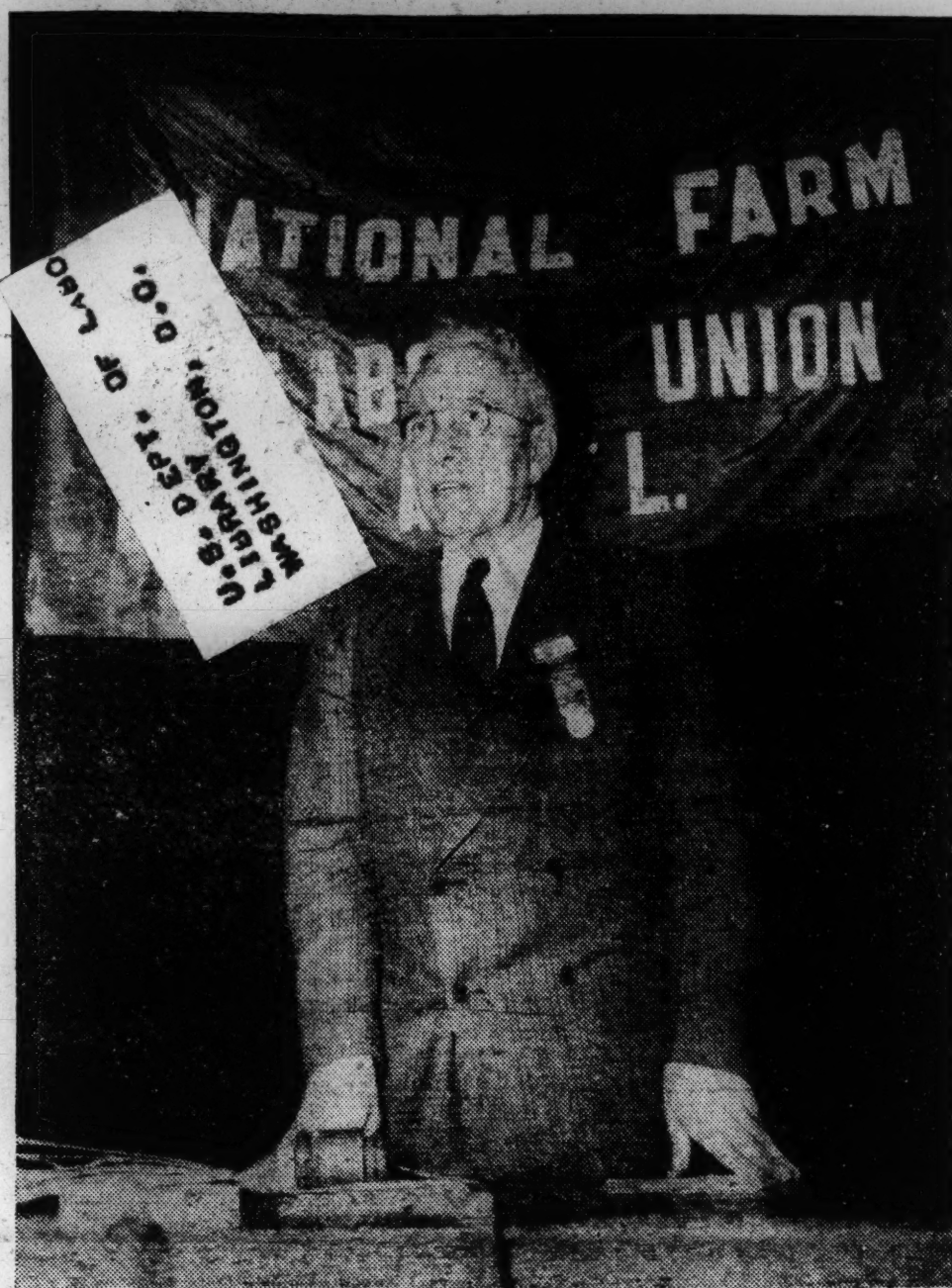
During the last week in January, Vice President Betton left the National Office for a thirty day stay in Florida. The Vice President will assist L. S. Warnock who is in charge of the organization of fruit pickers and grove workers in the state. Both Negro and white workers are joining the Union. Brother Warnock has meetings scheduled for five nights a week at the following towns: Auburndale, Lake Wales, Lakeland, Davenport, and Haines City. He reports at hundreds of pickers and grove workers are signing up and paying their union fees and dues.

Look For More

News Of Florida

The March issue of the Farm La-

Speaking To Convention



SENATOR GEORGE D. AIKEN

A United States Senator addresses the 13th annual convention of the National Farm Labor Union. Senator Aiken, a liberal Republican from Vermont, complimented the Union for being the first organization to urge Congress to end waste and extravagance in government by abolishing the program for importing foreign labor to work on the nation's farms.

NFLU Has California Big Shots Worried

Badly disturbed by the Union's move into California, and by the A.F. of L.'s success in organizing the canneries there, the labor-hating "Associated Farmers" have started new moves to get members to break strikes, pass laws against the working, and prevent them from organizing.

In a letter sent out to farmers all over California, a man named R. F. Schmeiser, who claims to be the head of an Associated Farmer county organization, boasted of his outfit's work "in breaking up farm strikes, defeat of unemployment insurance (for farm workers), and defeat of a Fair Employment Practices Act (FEPC)."

These "accomplishments" were achieved through un-American, under cover Ku Klux Klan methods, financed by big business. Honest farmers—big and little—will have nothing to do with such crooked business.

bor News will carry a full report of Union activity among the grove workers and citrus pickers. There will also be pictures of Florida Union members.

Public Ceremony For New Members

National Officers of the Union have decided that something more than just handing a new member a receipt for his dues and a membership card should be done.

"When a man joins the Union, we gain a brother—a new member of our Union family," said President Mitchell. "We should have a public ceremony to receive him into membership. He will feel more like one of us. I have directed Captain Taylor to set up such a plan, to be sent out as educational matter as directed by the Convention."

First tryout of the new ceremony, Capt. Taylor said, would be at Cotton Plant, Ark., on February 1, when each local affiliated with the Central Arkansas Council will bring forward all members who have joined the Union since October 1, 1946, to be received into the National Farm Labor Union.

Each member will be escorted to the platform by his own local President. He will then be given the Union handshake by a representative of the National office, and will have his union button pinned on his coat. The Chaplain will then offer a prayer for the new members.

Plans To Organize All Farm Workers Mapped At Convention

Washington, D. C.—The 13th annual convention of the National Farm Labor Union, A.F. of L., meeting in Washington, January 13, 14, 15, demanded the inclusion of three million farm workers under legislation such as the Wagner Act, Wage and Hour Act, and the Social Security Act.

A.F. Of L. To Aid

Organizing Campaign

Organization Director Frank P. Fenton of the American Federation of Labor, in addressing the farm labor convention, pledged the full support of the Federation to the Union's campaign to organize all of the three million farm workers in the United States.

U. S. Senator Will Help

Senator George D. Aiken who addressed the Union convention, complimented the organization on being the first to demand an end to extravagance and waste of government funds in importing foreign workers to take the jobs of American citizens. The Senator promised his support in the drive to bring legislative benefits to the nation's farm hands.

A.F. Of L. President Says

Largest Union In Making

President William Green of the American Federation of Labor, in a stirring address which was broadcast over the CBS radio network direct from the convention, told the delegates that, "Potentially your union can be the largest in our country. We are ready to help you reach that goal." President Green also said that the American Federation of Labor would support the Union in its demand for legislation to protect farm workers.

Conspiracy Of Officials And Farm Interests Revealed

George F. Webber and Samuel Diaz, delegates from El Paso, Texas, Local 53, speaking on a resolution asking for a congressional investigation of a conspiracy on the part of certain immigration officials and big farmers in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, charged that "Cheap Mexican Labor is flooding the country," and is being held in a state of peonage and driving native American citizens off the farms of Texas.

New Friends And Old

At The Convention

Arnold Zander, President of the State, County and Municipal Workers Union; Anthony Valente, President of the United Textile Workers of America; Adolph Held, Chairman of the Jewish Labor Committee; and Charles Zimmerman, Vice President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, were among the speakers addressing the convention. Representatives of the following A.F. of L. International Unions also attended and spoke to the delegates: E. E. Kennedy, United Mine Workers of America; William J. Gallagher, Painters and Paperhangers Union; E. L. Doyle, Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees; Charles E. Sands, Hotel and Restaurant Workers Association; Louis A. Lopez, Printers and Pressmen's Union; Ar

(Continued On Page Four)

Resolutions:

Adopted By The 13th Annual Convention
National Farm Labor Union
Washington, D. C., January 13, 14, 15, 1947

No. 1

Against Use Of Foreign Labor On Farms

The National Farm Labor Union condemns waste and extravagance in government and demands that Congress refuse to appropriate any more funds for the importation of foreign labor to be exploited on the nation's farms.

No. 2

Urges Extension Of Social Security To Farm Labor

The 13th. Annual Convention urges Congress to extend social security legislation to all types of farm labor. This would include: unemployment insurance, old age pensions, health, medical, and child care programs now applied to other American workers.

No. 3

Calls For Wage And Hour Law For Agriculture

The National Farm Labor Union demands a minimum wage and hour law for agricultural workers, with payment of time and a half for all overtime work.

No. 4

Protect The Right Of Farm Labor To Organize, Bargain

The Union demands the extension of the National Labor Relations Act to include farm labor employed in agriculture so that workers may be protected in their legal right to organize and bargain collectively with their employers.

No. 5

Congress Called Upon To Investigate Violations Of Mexican Immigration Laws

The Convention calls upon Congress to conduct an investigation of wholesale violations of the U. S. immigration laws on the Mexican border. The resolution states that there is evidence of a conspiracy between U. S. officials and the fruit, vegetable, and cotton growers in the Rio Grande Valley to peonize Mexican citizens and drive native Americans off the farms.

No. 6

Calls For Strengthening Of U. S. Civil Rights Law

The Convention orders newly elected officers to join other responsible organizations in a campaign to strengthen the Federal Civil Rights Act so that American citizens will not be deprived of legal rights on account of race, creed, color, or social status.

No. 7

National Program For Farm Labor Displaced By Machines

The Convention calls for the adoption of a national program to cushion to shock of labor displacement by the introduction of new machines, by providing training, and for transferring of rural workers to areas where employment opportunities in industry are open. Officers of the Union are ordered to acquaint other members of the threat to their labor standards by the wholesale displacement of farm labor.

No. 8

Establishes Work Standards

Inasmuch as low wages, poor living standards, and inefficiency of farm labor is expensive both to the

worker and to the employer, the Convention orders officers of the Union to set up work performance standards for Union members. And further, that training of agricultural workers be secured through responsible agencies such as land grant colleges.

No. 9

Union Favors Arbitration Of Disputes In Agriculture

The Convention pledges all efforts to prevent strikes in agriculture and orders officers to include in each contract, an arbitration clause so that production of perishable crops will not be delayed.

No. 10

Demands Enforcement Of Law Limiting Ownership Of Irrigated Land To 160 Acres

The Convention calls upon the U. S. Department of Interior to enforce the law limiting ownership of irrigated lands to 160 acres in all reclamation districts. Condemns attempts by commercial farm interests to abolish this law.

No. 11

Contracts For Individual Farm Workers

Officers of the Union are ordered to work out a standard contract form for members who work on small farms and plantations for the protection of both worker and employer.

No. 12

Seasonal Jobs For Farm Workers

Officers of the Union are instructed to extend as rapidly as possible, the program for placing members on seasonal jobs on farms and in industries when members are not at work at home.

No. 13

Educating Members For Home Ownership

Realizing the inability of members to purchase land and build homes in these days of high land values and building materials, the Convention instructs officers to carry on an educational campaign urging members to be thrifty and save money for the purchase of homes of their own.

No. 14

Federal Aid For Education

The Convention urges Congress to adopt a Federal Aid Program for education of the nation's children, and demands that there be no discrimination in the use of federal funds for the education of children even though there are two separate school systems in the Southern states.

No. 15

Education For Children Of Migratory Workers

The Convention adopts a resolution supporting a program worked out by the National Education Association for improving educational opportunities of children whose families must follow the crops from one area to another in order to make a living.

No. 16

Union Education And Health Programs

The Convention calls upon officers to conduct an educational program

and work out co-operative health programs for members of the Union.

No. 17

A Federal Un-employment Insurance Administration

The Convention urges the establishment of an un-employment insurance administration to eliminate the 48 varieties of un-employment insurance, all of which deny benefits to farm labor.

No. 18

Increasing Old Age Assistance Grants

The National Farm Labor Union urges Congress to increase grants of funds to the Southern states so that old age assistance may be raised and all aged people who are unable to earn their living, be made eligible for a pension.

No. 19

Calls For Administration Of Veterans' Affairs By One Federal Agency

The Convention condemned the violation of the G. I. Bill of Rights wherein veterans of World War II are denied opportunities to secure loans for business purposes and for buying farms and homes because of the maladministration of local agencies.

No. 20

Workmen's Compensation For Farm Workers

Under existing state laws, farm workers are denied workmen's compensation for death or injuries sustained while employed. The Convention calls upon the government to amend the law so that farm workers or their families may receive adequate compensation in case of temporary or permanent injury.

No. 21

Including Farm Labor Costs In Parity Prices

The National Farm Labor Union endorses the inclusion of farm labor costs in parity prices for farm products, provided minimum wages for farm labor are set, equal to those of the Fair Labor Standards Act for industrial workers.

No. 22

Food Supply Plans

The Union endorses the United Nations' Food and Agricultural Organization for purchase and distribution of surplus farm products in needy areas of the world. The Convention also endorses the food stamp plan for distribution of surplus farm products to under privileged American citizens.

No. 23

Poll Tax And Fair Employment Act

The Union re-affirms its historic position of opposition to poll tax laws and urges the enactment of a Fair Employment Practices Act.

No. 24

Condemns Farm Bureau Federation

The Convention calls attention of the public to the alliance of big business with the Farm Bureau Federation which represents itself as the spokesman for all farm people. The Convention condemns the Farm Bureau's anti-labor record.

No. 25

Civil Liberties Cases

The Convention calls upon the Department of Justice for action on the violations of civil liberties of citizens in the state of Missouri, in the towns of Portageville and Carruthersville. Officers of the Union are instructed to make all possible efforts to secure the release of Tee Davis, now in an Arkansas Prison Farm, serving a sentence for defending his home.

No. 26

A Youth Program For The Union

The Convention urges that the interest of women members be aroused and that steps be taken to set up in all locals, a "Farm Labor Union Circle" to include all children of Union members.

No. 27

Educating Other Union Members On Farm Labor Problems

Officers of the National Farm Labor Union are instructed to undertake an intensive campaign to educate the other trade unions of America in the problems of farm labor and their relation to industrial workers.

No. 28

Opposes Conscription And Urges Amnesty For Conscientious Objectors

The Union upholds the historic position of the American Federation of Labor in reference to military conscription and amnesty for conscientious objectors to warfare.

No. 29

Use Of Quotas For Europe's Displaced Persons

The National Farm Labor Union concurs in the position taken by the 65th. annual convention of the American Federation of Labor in reference to permitting displaced persons from Europe entering the United States on the basis of unused quotas set for countries where these people originate.

No. 30

Co-operatives And Credit Unions

The Convention orders continuation of the Union's program of sponsoring co-operatives among members and urges the development of a program for establishing functioning credit unions.

No. 31

Amending The Constitution

The Convention amended the Union's Constitution to provide for raising of initiation fees to \$2.00 and set up two classes of membership for Local Unions. The family type membership dues for workers employed on farms as sharecroppers, tenants, and casual laborers is set at \$5.00 per year. Members employed on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis for regular wages will pay not less than \$1.00 per month dues. This new rate becomes effective February 15, 1947.

No. 32

Honorary Life Membership

By Convention resolution adopted unanimously, Brothers J. F. Hynds and J. E. Clayton were given life membership on the National Executive Council of the National Farm Labor Union.

CONVENTION PICTURES

Delegates Register



Naomi Coachman of Atlanta and "Pat" Taylor of Memphis, wife of Barney B. Taylor, Organization Director for the Union, are in charge of registration of delegates.

Convention In Session



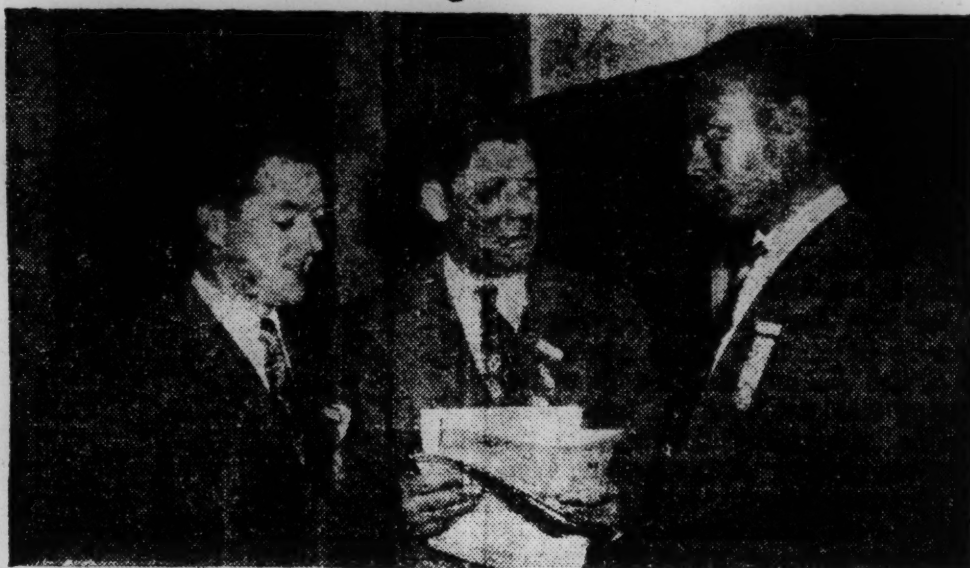
A part of the delegates are shown as the convention opens on Monday, January 13th. In the front row are Union veterans, J. F. Hynds of Spruce Pine, Ala.; Noah Graham of Bragg City, Missouri; B. S. Beck of Gobler, Missouri; Grover Peterson of Portageville, Missouri, and Fred Quick of the same local.

President Green Speaking



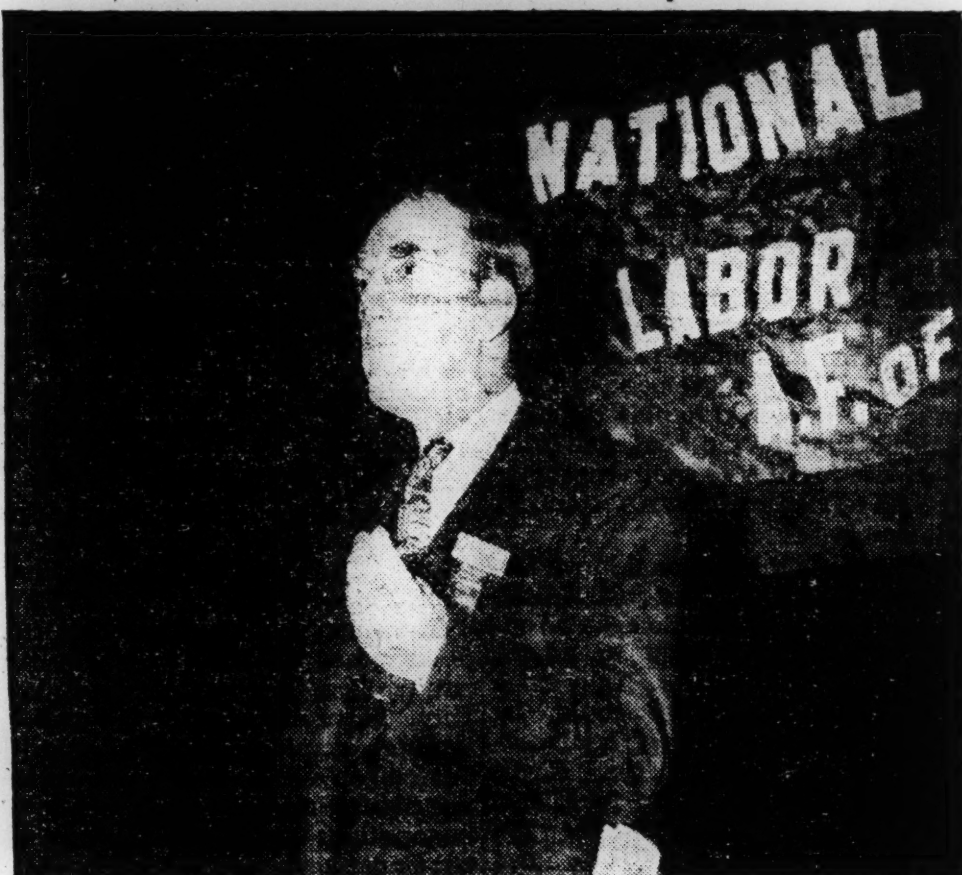
The President of the American Federation of Labor brings the convention to an end with a stirring address broadcast over the C.B.S. radio network.

'Talking It Over'



Delegates Elmer Hewitt from Local 56, New Jersey, and Executive Council member George Stith of Arkansas, discuss some resolutions with President Mitchell as the convention gets underway.

A. F. Of L. Director Speaks



The first speaker on the Union's convention program in Washington was Frank P. Fenton, Director of Organization for the American Federation of Labor. Mr. Fenton pledged the full support of the A.F. of L. to the Union's nation-wide campaign to organize farm labor.

Ceremony---'Men Of The Land'



Delegates to the annual convention march one by one up to the platform, pick up a few grains of soil from their native state and mingle them with the soil of other states represented in the convention. Mrs. Willie Betton leads the way, followed by Mrs. Arthur Churchill and all other delegates.

Guest Column—

Strikeout On One Ball

By PAUL SIFTON

Cheerfulness keeps creeping into even the grimmest discussions. Like sex or the sap that starts in the spring, it has a tendency to keep busting out all over.

For example, take Sen. Joe Ball (R., Michigan) and the National Farm Labor Union Convention.

Joe had just finished having his picture taken in a press conference at which he unveiled his plans for "telling workers loose" in local plant unions, "liberating" them from the horrible slavery of negotiating contracts on an industry-wide or nation-wide basis. Like Queen Victoria, he was not amused when a reporter suggested that, if it was a good idea to break big unions into little unions, why not go all the way and "liberate" the individual worker to stand up in all his independent strength to the plant manager of General Motors Fisher Body plant, No. 2, who, to date, has enjoyed all the independence of a monkey on a hand organ.

Unionists looked at the Ball picture and story, shuddered and rubbed their eyes, as if trying to dispel a vision of angry pink elephants piloted by Boris Karloff. It was the latest and grimmest twist in a drive that promised to keep labor on the defensive for the rest of the winter. All Washington was resigned to beating its gums for months about the future of the labor movement, whither are we drifting, how to plug the holes in the bottom of the boat, and what do we use for oars to keep from sinking and—or being blown farther up Salt Creek.

Along came the National Farm Labor Convention. It was just a little convention, about 100 delegates representing about 30,000 members, mostly in southern states. They came the cheapest way they could, by jalopy and bus, with long hauls between places where the Negro brothers could stop for food, etc. They came to put the case for "the excluded," some 3,000,000 farm workers, right on the doorstep and under the noses of the brand new Congress. They opened their sessions with fervent prayers and with singing; they said "Amen" and "That's right" to speakers from older successful and richer unions who told of past struggles of workmen to organize, of blacklists, killings and the slow job of building union strength. They sang "Roll The Union On."

They said they were going to carry the message and the blessings of unionism to 3,000,000 men, women and children working the land of others for wages or shares of the crop. To start, they would spread the glad tidings in California, home base of Associated Farmers, the citrus and truck ranches of the Rio Grande, the Florida grapefruit and orange groves and the big cotton

WARNING! KEEP AWAY!



National Labor Service

Labor knows the danger of racial and religious discrimination!

Jersey Stock Farm Workers Organize

Application has been made by 15 workers for a local near Jersey City, N. J. Organization work was done by John L. Saqui, A.F. of L. organizer. Patrick Garland is President; Thomas Barrett, Secretary-Treasurer; and William Deely, Recording Secretary of the National Farm Labor Union Local 203, known as the "Stock Farm Workers of Northern New Jersey."

The membership of the new local is composed of workers employed in raising hogs just outside New York City. There are between 200 and 300 workers employed in this industry. As soon as a majority of the workers are signed up with their employers negotiations for a union contract will get underway.

plantations of Mississippi and Arkansas.

Organized labor, preparing to fight for its life in Washington, was busting out in a new place, the hitherto immune fields of American agriculture. The delegates were quiet, serious men and women of many races and colors, familiar with want and low wages, with intimidation even in the courtroom and with sudden death for persons—sometimes farm hands, sometimes brave employers—who "believed union."

They were not grim; they were determined in the easy way of seasoned troops going into another battle with a chance to win. They were happy. They liked Sen. George Aiken (R., Vermont) who said they should have health services and education for their children and protection against cut-throat wage competition. They liked union brothers from other unions. They liked practically everybody, except the planters, the bosses, the merchants and the bankers. For them they had a song born of hunger in the day and terror in the night: "If the planters in the way, we goin' to roll it over them, 'Going to roll the Union on.'"

The spirit of the convention made the efforts of Joe Ball, Howard Smith, Clare Hoffman and a swarm of others to break American unionism into pieces as silly as a gang of pygmies trying to use tin cups to pour Niagara Falls back into Lake Erie.

Plans To Organize All Farm Workers

(Continued From Page One)

McDowell, Upholsterers' Union; John Beere, Union Label Department; Frank S. Coleman, Washington Central Labor Union. Shayne MacCarthy, U. S. Department of Labor; and Wilbur Cohen of the Social Security Board also addressed the convention.

Alfred Baker Lewis, Rose Pesotta, Blaine Treadway, Dr. William R. Amberson, Paul Sifton, Gardner Jackson and others, brought to the delegates memories of the early struggles of the Union and predicted increasing success in efforts being made to extend the organization throughout the U.S.A.

Delegates Go Sight Seeing In Washington

Nearly all of the delegates took advantage of the opportunity to go sightseeing in the nation's capital. Special buses were provided and guides showed the delegates many of the public buildings in Washington, including the Capitol. Delegates reported that the tour alone was worth a trip to Washington.

Officers Elected

The following officers and Executive Council members were elected for the year 1947: H. L. Mitchell, President; F. R. Betton, Vice President; Dorothy Dowe, Secretary-Treasurer. Executive Council members: A. E. Cox, of Mississippi; George Webber, of Texas; George Stith and Carrie Dilworth of Arkansas; Arthur Churchill and B. S. Beck, of Missouri. J. F. Hynds, of Alabama and J. E. Clayton, of Chicago, were named as life members on the Council.

Celery Cutters And Pickers Organize In California

Information has just been received by the National Farm Labor Union that a large group of celery cutters and pickers near San Diego, California have joined the Union. A majority of the celery workers in the fields have been signed up, according to a telegram received from A.F. of L. Organizer Richard P. Minihan of Los Angeles. He stated that one of his staff members, Organizer Randall, had done the preliminary work. An application for a charter for the group is expected as the Farm Labor News goes to press.

Philippino Farm Labor Organizing In West

Leaders of Philippino farm laborers employed in "America's Salad Bowl," the Salinas River Valley of California, are beginning a campaign to organize their people into the National Farm Labor Union. There are about 5,000 Philippino workers near Salinas who are employed on vegetable farms the year round. There are also 25,000 more workers of this nationality in California whose chief occupation is following the crops.

Messages Received At Convention

Telegrams and letters extending greetings to the delegates were received from practically all international unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. These messages were read to the delegates and entered into the record.

Cablegrams extending greetings to the convention were received from the Scottish Farm Servants Union, the Swedish Land Workers, and the International Landworkers' Federation.

How To Get Your Copy Of Farm Labor News

The FARM LABOR NEWS is being sent to all paid up members of the Union. Any paid up member who is not receiving the FARM LABOR NEWS each month, should write to the office giving his name and full address. Non-members who want to get the FARM LABOR NEWS must subscribe. The rate is 25¢ a year. Stamps, money orders, or cash may be sent to the FARM LABOR NEWS, Box 443, Memphis 1, Tennessee. Tell us the place where you get your mail. Give route number, box number, town, and state.

Pass Your Farm Labor News On To Your Neighbors. Let Them Know What The Union Is Doing For Its Members

Farm Labor News

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